

THE

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. XLVI.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 1852.

No. 22.

ANÆMOTOSIS, ITS CONSEQUENCES, PREVENTION AND TREATMENT:

BY GEO. J. ZIEGLER, M.D.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—In some recent editorial remarks on the "Treatment of Consumption," you deprecate the unsuccessful results of medical efforts in the attempt to cure this affection. Yet with all due deference to the opinion of one so much my senior both in knowledge and experience, I respectfully beg leave to entertain a somewhat more hopeful view of the subject than is there presented; being strongly convinced, not only from the natural history of this disease and the recent developments of science and experiments in the art of medicine, but from my own personal experience, that it is more amenable to treatment than is generally believed or imagined. I do not pretend to assert, however, that, after the effects of the true condition and their consequences and concomitants have progressed to such an extent as to destroy the organs essential to the vital processes and their existence, it can be eradicated or corrected. This cannot be effected in any other organic affection, when advanced beyond a certain point, and involving, to a definite degree, some indispensable part of the vital machinery.

Until comparatively recent times, this affection has been considered as of a primary and exclusively local character. But the investigations and disclosures of science have demonstrated its secondary nature, and its general dependencies and complications. Yet, notwithstanding these developments, attention does not appear to be sufficiently directed to the primary condition, but rather too exclusively to its special and ultimate results. This diathesis has been included under the denomination of tuberculosis, though it is very generally employed to designate both the antecedent and consequent, and often separately applied to the general effects, viz., the development and deposition of a peculiar principle denominated tubercle. Thus the attention has been in consequence too partially concentrated on the secondary condition in which this *materies morbi* has been already elaborated, rather than on that on which its production and elimination is primarily dependent, which limited observation seems to have exercised an injurious influence in retarding more effective investigation and advancement. And although it is now almost universally admitted that this

accidental production and abnormal deposit is a mere effect of abortive nutrition, the result of general organic derangement, and that all the subsequent processes of irritation, congestion, hemorrhage, inflammation and softening, and consequent destruction of the adventitious matter and surrounding normal tissue, and ultimately of life itself, are necessarily secondary, tertiary, and quaternary results, being merely links in the same chain of organic derangement, degeneration and destruction, yet this knowledge does not appear to have stimulated research sufficiently to ascertain and determine some more certain and direct method of not only preventing or correcting this primary diathesis or condition, so far as congenital deficiencies and hereditary influences will permit, and thus of averting the secondary results, but also of aiding more efficiently in removing them, or moderating and rectifying their sequelæ when they have become developed or are in full activity.

Generally long before the abnormal development and deposition, and the consequent supervention of this affection, there is a gradual diminution of the vital energies. Associated with, or dependent on, this uniform state of general inanition, there is often derangement of one or more of the principal nutritive or depurative organs, as the stomach, liver, &c. But connected with or independent of this general vital degeneration and special aberration, there is frequently a distinct and positive diminution of the pulmonary functions. Nutrition is thus more directly deranged, and the organic operations rendered still more defective and inefficient, and consequently the metamorphic process for the conversion of the nutrient matter into healthy plasma is arrested or becomes imperfect, and the process does not continue up to that high point of organization essential to normal nutrition; and hence, abortive development.

In fact, it would seem the true source of the primary condition and secondary product is, usually, found in, and dependent on, the defective operations of the respiratory apparatus and degradation of its function, though it may also be the result of the disproportionate activity of the digestive organs. The function of the pulmonary organs to supply the necessary chemical elements from the atmosphere for the perfection of the organic processes, undoubtedly holds an important position in the scale of nutrition. Indeed, it appears to be, and doubtless is, the culminating process in the organization of the crude materials introduced into the system, and the excrementitious matters to be eliminated from the economy, as by the supply of the atmospheric elements they not only furnish the agents necessary for complete animalization, but also to a certain extent those for the constitution and formation of those substances which are found in the blood and excreted by the various depurative organs—the lungs themselves subserving the two purposes of nutritive and depurative organs. It will thus be seen that generally this nutritive aberration and abnormal production is more exclusively dependent on the deprivation of the atmospheric constituents, and where the tuberculous tendency is sufficiently active, results in the production of this peculiar *materies morbi*, which, according to circumstances, is deposited in various parts of the system, but most frequently and abundantly in the lungs.

Space is too limited for an examination of the subject in its numerous ramifications. Our intention for the present is rather to glance at its general features, than its special details, with the object of inviting attention to some means of *preventing* the inception of this condition, and the development and deposition of the resulting morbid matter; it being far better to avert its production, than correct its sequelæ. This imperfect examination of a fundamental part of the subject will suffice for that purpose.

In consequence of the numerous impediments to scientific improvement, the knowledge of physiology, pathology and therapeutics on this point has been, until recently, so limited as to confine the attention almost exclusively to the effects rather than to the cause. But the dark and apparently impenetrable mist which has so long obscured the view, is rapidly passing away, through the influence of the steady illuminating rays of scientific research. The prospect is, in consequence, becoming more distinct, and the knowledge so much the more correct, that closer observation strongly induces the hope that it may not only be retarded or corrected, even where far advanced, but, what is much more desirable, that it may be favorably modified and even averted. Therefore, in continuation of this investigation, we shall, by facts and principles, endeavor to show that not only this, but similar conditions, which have heretofore been considered as beyond the reach of therapeutic influence, are, *cæteris paribus*, as much in its power, and as capable of prevention and correction, as many of those ordinarily esteemed of minor importance.

It having been already demonstrated that the primary condition is dependent on the failure of some link in the great chain of organization or animalization, and that it is usually, if not generally, in consequence of the defective hæmastatic metamorphoses, and that the tuberculous development is a mere result of this primary derangement of a fundamental organic process, it remains now to extend the application of this principle to the elucidation of other obscure pathological points, and thus determine how far the same cause is active in the production of similar derangements.

Strongly analogous to this condition of tuberculosis, are those states or diatheses, the effects of which are known as fatty degeneration, and when extensive, obesity; albuminous condition of the blood, with its excretion, as in albuminuria, or its deposition, giving rise to those anomalous renal affections and complications generally included under the denomination of Bright's disease; the excessive production and evolution of saccharine matter, as in diabetes; &c. Recent investigations not only of a physiological and pathological, but experimental character, fully demonstrate the truthfulness of this view. Yet to sustain it more definitely, I have only to refer to well-known facts bearing on the subject, and the opinions and experiments of the most celebrated men engaged in the investigation of medical science.

The consequences arising from the generation, retention and presence in the system, the conversion and deposition into various tissues, and the expulsion from the economy of the various principles above desig-

nated, are strikingly analogous in numerous respects. Thus when the lungs become inadequate to, or are impeded in the due performance of their function, the liver, having, in consequence, an excess of duty to perform in eliminating the carbo-hydrogenous elements or materials, soon becomes incapable of the increased effort, or derangement more directly ensues, when its own structure is either modified, the general fatty tissue increased, or both are effected, besides the occasional induction of other more occult and ultimate changes. In the second, in consequence of the abortive animalization, the albumen does not become converted into true plasma. Hence it is necessarily thrown on such organs as the kidneys for removal from the body; and as long as they are capable of successfully performing this duty, it is discharged, and the vital equilibrium, so far as it is thus dependent, partially preserved. But after a time their excreting forces fail, or their vessels and tubes become infiltrated with this matter, when similar effects result from its presence and the consequent irritation and degeneration induced, as follow and are effected in the lungs by tubercle, differing, of course, in their character according to the substance, tissue, organ and function implicated. In the last, Bernard has shown that glucose is formed in the liver; and Reygnoso, that its presence in the urine may be caused by those agents which will moderate and check the respiratory function—presupposing, of course, in all of these aberrations, that the peculiar or specific diathesis is active, one being more predominant than another according to controlling or modifying circumstances.

Now I am convinced, from the evidence thus afforded, and the careful examination of facts and principles connected with this subject, that all of these conditions and adventitious materials—the first of which is known as Tuberculosis and its production tubercle; by analogy the second may be denominated Adiposis, the result of which is fatty conversion and degeneration; the third Albuminosis, giving rise to albuminous evolution and its consequences; and the fourth, Glucosis, or the undue development, non-conversion and expulsion of sugar—are all dependent most generally and directly on one great cause, and that is inefficient oxygenation and nitrogenization of the blood and the materials about to form, and those resulting from it, or, in other words, defective hæmatisis. Hence this subject resolves itself into the class Anæmatisis and its orders, thus—

Class. ANÆMATISIS.			
Order i.	<i>Tuberculosis.</i>	Order iii.	<i>Albuminosis.</i>
" ii.	<i>Adiposis.</i>	" iv.	<i>Glucosis.</i>

There are also other orders of this class, such as Toxicosis, &c., but they will not be specially noticed in this paper, particularly as the subject matter has been before alluded to in former publications.

It is obvious that the failure or deficiency of this principal function, viz., respiration and the consequent defective hæmatisis, must necessarily produce derangement of all the other organs and functions of the economy, and if extended too far or continued too long, rapidly or gradually, directly or indirectly, prove destructive to life action. The re-

sult of a partial and gradual deprivation of atmospheric air is generally, however, so slowly and obscurely manifested as to excite very little if any notice, whilst the phenomena and effects induced by its sudden and complete privation are so striking as to attract immediate and universal attention and excite active efforts to avert its disastrous effects. Still, the effects of the former, though not so apparent, are nevertheless as certainly active, and the most primary aberrations are to be found in the derangement of the functions of the great nutritive and depurative organs as above indicated, viz., the stomach, lungs, liver, kidneys, &c. It requires but a very superficial examination of the functions of these organs, the latter especially, and the elements essential to them, to be able to trace the general effects resulting from the protracted partial privation of the stimulus and elements afforded by the atmospheric influences and constituents, and the metamorphoses induced by and through their agency. The immediate or ultimate effects of this deficiency or deprivation are too generally the modification, and often complete subversion of the vital processes and the development of adventitious matter and their consequences ; of which we have before spoken.

Now frequently when the organism is deranged, it becomes necessary for its preservation to correct such by a resort to the numerous remedial agents so abundantly scattered throughout nature and supplied by art, and if this derangement depends upon a deficiency of those substances necessary to the sustenance of the body, as the ordinary alimentary matter, or of those agents essential to the integrity of the blood, as iron, &c., these are obviously to be and are directly supplied. But in those aberrations dependent on a privation of the elements necessary to the perfection of the principal and concluding nutrient metamorphic processes for complete animalization, this indispensable prerequisite has heretofore been almost if not entirely neglected, or only sufficiently recognized to be chiefly entrusted to the natural powers for their direct appropriation from the atmosphere, though endeavoring in some cases, partially and indirectly, through the influence of certain agents possessing an abundance of, or a great affinity for one of these elements, as the chalybeates, &c., to cause this appropriation. In numerous instances, however, these are very imperfect and inefficient, therefore it is highly necessary that some more direct and certain means for supplying this deficiency should be ascertained and secured. And in this exploratory examination of the elements and materials forming and comprising the earth, and the combinations resulting from their union and modification by art, in search of an agent for this purpose, the attention is more particularly drawn towards, and concentrated upon, those substances having the constituents and properties of the one to be supplied, in this instance the atmosphere itself. But in the prosecution of this design, the search heretofore appears to have been too limited, and the investigations too partial, being misdirected and retarded in consequence of the initiatory assumption that most, and even all, of the salutary influences thus exercised on organic action by the atmosphere, were exclusively dependent on one of its constituents, viz., oxygen, and erroneously conceiving that

its other element, nitrogen, was entirely negative and inactive. Now it is just as essential to the perfection of the organic processes that this latter should also be introduced into the economy, as the former; and when the vital machinery and forces become too much deranged and enfeebled to introduce and appropriate a sufficiency of these elements from the atmosphere, it is absolutely necessary to readily supply and cause such by other means. Fortunately for this purpose, there is an agent which is so analogous to the atmospheric air, in being not only isomeric by containing the same chemical constituents, and isomorphic in having the same physical form and characteristics, but resembling it also still more strikingly in possessing similar physiological properties and influences on the animal economy, that it may be justly considered as its direct analogue. This agent, it need scarcely be said, is the *protoxide of nitrogen*.

In my first publication on this subject, I invited attention to the constitution, properties and similitudes of this agent, and the extensive therapeutic and toxicological applications to which it seemed susceptible, and made the following preliminary observations respecting it—"This gas appears to have been strangely overlooked and neglected by the profession as a remedial agent. It is well known that it is a powerful, rapid and permanent arterial and nervous stimulant, exciting an ecstatic feeling, as if we were elevated many degrees above this life to a higher and more refined degree of organization or existence, divested of all the gross accompaniments of this; and this feeling not being followed by that state of sedation or depression which results from oxygen and other stimulants, having properties much more analogous, and therefore more appropriate, to the atmospheric air, than any other compound of nitrogen and oxygen, or even pure oxygen, or any other known substance."

I then proceeded to prove the truthfulness of these declarations by quotations from the highest authority on the subject, to which I will again briefly refer, particularly as totally opposite properties and applications have recently been, though necessarily unsuccessfully, attributed to and claimed for this agent.

[To be continued.]

FREQUENT MISCARRIAGES.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

DEAR SIR,—Some months since, I was called to attend a woman, taken with hemorrhage from the uterus. She considered herself to be seven months along in pregnancy. The menses had ceased for that period of time, and she had thought herself attaining a corresponding development in size. Finding the symptoms not urgent, I enjoined quiet, and prescribed astringents with opiates, cold applications, &c., as seemed indicated, and left, to attend upon an obstetric case in the vicinity. In the course of a few hours, I visited her again, and found, that after having a few forcible pains she had thrown off a body, which, upon

examination, proved to be a two months fœtus, enveloped in its membranes, lying upon the placenta. It had every appearance of having been dead for some time. She got up well, and had had no previous inconvenience. I have no doubt that the fœtus had lain five months dead in the uterus.

Cases of abortion and miscarriage have been unusually frequent in this vicinity during the past year. The husband of one lady has come to me twice within the year, stating that his wife was six months advanced in pregnancy, but that now she felt certain the child was dead, and could state the time when it ceased to live. She was having no unpleasant symptoms, but was anxious as to the result. No active interference being deemed advisable, at the end of a week, in each instance, labor pains came on and effected delivery in a few hours. No untoward symptoms followed, the secretion of milk was established, and she nursed a child each time.

There seems to be no other cause for these miscarriages than habit. The year before she had had one, which was attributed to over-exercise combined with some mental anxiety.

Respectfully, &c.

Hadley, Mass., June 18, 1852.

FRANKLIN BONNEY.

IS NITROUS OXIDE ANÆSTHETIC?

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

DURING the winter of 1847-8, the class of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, was notified that a new anæsthetic was to be administered at the New York Hospital. I went to the Hospital, and heard Dr. Kearney Rodgers present Horace Wells as a gentleman who had just returned from France, where he had been awarded 25,000 francs for being the first discoverer of anæsthesia. I do not remember by whom the award was said to have been made. A number of professors from both colleges were present, as well as many gentlemen from the classes, who will doubtless remember the remarks.

Dr. W., on being introduced, said he had discovered that if the patient took the gas with the impression that he was to lie still and submit to an operation, he would conduct accordingly; and that there would be entire unconsciousness of suffering during the action of the gas. He then administered the protoxide of nitrogen gas to a patient, and Dr. Rodgers performed a blepharoplastic operation for ectropium. The patient was carried out before consciousness returned.

Immediately following, Dr. Rodgers used chloroform in another operation for burn cicatrix, it being the first time he had administered it in the Hospital. Dr. R. remarked that the action of the chloroform was the happiest, from the fact that the blood was less venous, showing a more perfect aëration in the chloroform patient.

The question of priority in the discovery of the anæsthetic use of these articles is one which I do not discuss, as it does not interest me. But as Dr. Wells destroyed himself within a week after I saw him presented at the Hospital, I merely mention this circumstance for the con-

sideration of your correspondent H. A. H., as Dr. W. would undoubtedly have done it for himself had he not, in his devotion to science, experimented with chloroform to his own ruin. He was a noble-looking specimen of a man, and though I saw him but once, I have retained a vivid recollection of the circumstances.

Now did or did not Dr. W.'s patients suffer when under the influence of the gas? If they did, then Dr. Rodgers, who used the knife, and all who were looking on, were mistaken. If not, then Sir H. Davy did not carry his experiments far enough to arrive at the truth.

The assertion that the gas will not produce insensibility, from Sir H. Davy's conclusions, lacks very little in my estimation of being "simply ridiculous." As the writer is pleased to say of Dr. W.'s pretensions, I felt annoyed to find that I had been laboring under so erroneous an impression respecting this property of the article in question, and wish for information.

IRA MANLEY, JR.

Markesan, Marquette Co., Wis., June, 1852.

DEATH CAUSED BY A DISCHARGE OF SERUM FROM THE LUNGS.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—The following remarkable case of death resulting from pulmonary serous hemorrhage occurred during the summer of 1847, soon after which the accompanying article was prepared for publication. From some cause it was laid away with other papers, and therefore has failed of making its appearance until now.

Mr. Smith Bradt, the subject of this article, was an amiable young man of about 20 years of age, son of a respectable farmer living about four miles from this town. He died very suddenly on the 18th August, at 4 o'clock, A.M. His height was six feet three inches, but he was remarkably slim, and possessed a nervous sanguine temperament and feeble constitution. To all appearance the vital forces had been pretty much expended in hastily erecting an elevated structure, without much regard to strength, solidity or durability. Although he was truly a ghost-like looking person, yet he rarely complained of any indisposition whatever—performing his share of labor on the farm up to within four days of his decease, with the exception of two instances, one of which was somewhat over a year prior to his death, when he had an attack of peritonitis, which was not at all severe. He was not confined to his room, and promptly recovered by the use of purgatives, antimony and blisters. About four weeks before his death, he called at my office with a very severe and painful phlegmonous tumor of two days' standing, situated on the inside of one of the wrists. In view of its location and the extreme pain he suffered, I adopted Velpeau's treatment, and laid the tumor open freely. It bled profusely. The suffering was instantly abated, and soon went off entirely. Within a few days he was entirely cured, and he returned to the labors of the field.

Four days before his death the weather was extremely warm, and he labored unusually hard in harvesting. Two days after this, not feeling

well, he did but little, when he gave out entirely and quit work. Still he was not confined to his room, and sat at table as usual, but complained of a "bad cold," sore throat, and some pain in his right side in the region of the fifth and sixth ribs, extending around to the sternum, yet did not cough much. The family thought he was threatened with fever: and on the day before his death he took a dose of calomel, followed with salts, which appeared to give relief. The following evening he sat up as usual until bed-time, but the family noticed that he was more restless than usual, throwing his arms about. Still he did not make any complaint. About midnight his mother was awakened by a strange sound in his chamber. She instantly got up and went to his room, where she found him apparently in a fit, his head thrown far back, struggling for breath, frothing at the mouth, and apparently insensible. He soon, however, came out of this state, was sensible, breathed more easily and sat up in bed. At this time a profuse discharge of frothy fluid took place from his mouth and nose. The fluid at first was nearly colorless, but became slightly tinged with blood. The family were all alarmed, and the neighbors called in a physician. For some reason I did not go, and my partner, Dr. Bradway, obeyed the call; but just as he arrived at the gate the man breathed his last. "The countenance, when I arrived," says Dr. B., "appeared shrunken, and his eyes dim and shrivelled as of one who had died of hemorrhage or some fatal drain upon the system."

During the short period of four hours that transpired from the time his mother went to his bed until he breathed his last, the quantity of serum discharged from his lungs was very great. There were twelve large coarse cotton pillow cases thoroughly saturated with the fluid, besides a large amount that necessarily fell on the bed-clothes and floor, for at times the discharge was truly frightful. He rapidly sank, and died without a struggle or a groan. He took no medicine, except a little dilute vinegar or something of the kind, "to clear out his throat and assist him to breathe."

Dr. B requested a post-mortem examination, which was freely granted, and twenty-nine hours after death, by his assistance, I performed the same. All the viscera of the abdominal cavity appeared quite healthy, except the spleen, which was somewhat enlarged, probably from the influence of malaria. Upon raising the sternum, the lungs did not collapse; they were rather darker than usual, except a portion of the left lung, which on its anterior border appeared perfectly healthy. There was in the cavities occupied by the lungs, some half pint of bloody serum, the most of which was in the right side. The posterior surface of the lungs presented a sodden appearance. Upon cutting into their substance, the same frothy, bloody serum flowed out that was discharged from his mouth. No appearance of tubercles, and no indications of remote or recent inflammation in the cavity of the thorax. The blood in the vessels was unusually dark and solid.

I look upon this case as one of pulmonary congestion, resulting in serous effusion, and caused by malaria. There is no doubt in my mind that the subject died of depletion, as truly as though he had been bled.

to death from an artery or vein. Congestion is an essential element in the pathology of miasmatic diseases, and the second link in the chain of morbid organic lesions, preceded by and depending upon a primary destruction of the balance between the forces of assimilation and transformation in the system of nutrition. Re-action is an effort on the part of the system, designed to remove congestion and consume and get rid of the effete matter or transformed tissues by converting them into carbonic acid, and water, which can pass out of the system in form of gas and fluid, and thereby relieve the liver and other secreting organs of this unnatural burden. Effusion of both blood and serum from congestion into the bowels, lungs and brain, is not an unusual complication in the malarious diseases of the West. I have seen a large number of fatal cases from effusion into the bowels, and examined post-mortem a number that died from congestion of both brain and bowels, but this is the only one of a fatal nature that has fallen under my observation, in which death occurred from a discharge of the watery portion of the blood through the lungs, and I do not now remember of seeing a case of the kind on record. Still I have no doubt but there have been similar cases, and they may have been published without my knowledge. The fact is almost every day demonstrated, that new *discoveries* and *inventions* are really old and obsolete.

H. HUNT, M.D.

Delavan, Wis., June 10, 1852.

RIVAL CLAIMS TO THE DISCOVERY OF ETHERIZATION.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—The writer in your issue of June 16th, on the "*discovery of etherization*," might have adduced things of infinitely more weight than his bare opinion. For instance, the Legislature of Connecticut, after due investigation, decided that the discovery belongs to Dr. Wells. The Paris physicians have decided that it belongs to Dr. Jackson; while a committee of Congress incline to the claims of Dr. Morton. Here, then, for each claimant, stands high, very high, weighty, and uncontestedly respectable, as well as impartial authority. To reject the opinion of either of these bodies, so competent, so dignified, so discerning, would seem something like an insult.

Let wealth nor power no truth conceal,
But to the world justice reveal.

And this consists in giving every man his due. Now this cannot possibly be done but by making each party a participant in the reward. And that a liberal one is merited, is indisputable. The illustrious Boerhaave used to say of opium, that it was *the finger of God*. And this discovery, in our view, equals, if not exceeds, the virtues of that unequalled production of nature.

The first time your present correspondent was ever in Boston, was in the year 1817. He brought a letter of introduction to one gentleman on whom he called; and soon after entering his splendid mansion,

word was brought that a married daughter of his, who lived across the street, was seized with such a violent toothache that she could not attend a party to which she was invited. I made known to the wife of my host my remedy in such cases. It was to put a little ether into the palm of the hand and apply it to the cheek of the pained side. Mrs. — sent my prescription to her daughter, who tried it, with immediate relief, and was enabled to attend her party.

Sir, do not consider yourself about to hear of a new claimant. I took up my pen purely out of my own sense of what is rightfully due to the three parties above mentioned—due in the sight of heaven and earth, in sight of the world medical and unmedical, professional and unprofessional. Having no connection with either party, direct or indirect, nor even having so much as seen either of them, all I ask, aim at, and desire, is truth and impartial

JUSTICE.

June 25th, 1852.

CASE OF BLIGHTED OVUM.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

Was called April 9th, 1852, to see Mrs. B., aged 25 years; nervous lymphatic temperament, full habit and good constitution, having enjoyed uniformly good health previous to the present difficulty, and has borne two children. She informed me that she became pregnant about the last of July, 1851, and experienced the usual symptoms attending the early periods of pregnancy; such as suppression of menses, nausea, vomiting, &c. The abdomen, she thinks, increased in size about the same as it had done in her previous pregnancies.

Some time in November, as near as she could remember about the middle, she had a fall, which was followed by very great soreness across the abdomen and loins; but was attended with no hemorrhage or pains denoting uterine contractions. She had felt no motion previous to the accident, which must have occurred between the third and fourth months. The soreness gradually subsided, so that she was enabled in the course of two or three weeks to attend to her usual household duties. The uterus slowly enlarged after this, and rose above the pelvis near the umbilicus; but she never felt any motion.

Some three weeks previous to my seeing the patient, she commenced having a dark, offensive, sanguineous discharge from the uterus. This continued unabated up to the time the case first came under my observation. By a vaginal examination I found the os firmly closed, not even admitting the tip of the finger, and of a firm and healthy feeling, except a slight abrasion or ulcer upon the anterior lip. As before described, the uterus reached near the umbilicus, was flaccid and quite tender upon pressure, and yet there was no attending febrile action, the patient only complaining of a constant feeling of lassitude and debility; the countenance rather anæmic; still able to be about the house.

Diagnosis.—If I placed any reliance upon her statement that she became *enccainte* the last of July, and that notwithstanding the accident

which befel her she had had no hemorrhage or pains denoting uterine contraction by which the ovum could have been expelled, I must of necessity come to the conclusion that it still remained in the uterus, and that the injury was sufficient to suspend its further development, and yet not sufficient to cause its expulsion; consequently it had been retained harmlessly enclosed within the membranes, until the discharge began, when undoubtedly the membranes were ruptured, and a decomposition and gradual discharge of the embryo commenced, giving rise to the dark and offensive evacuation before mentioned.

Treatment.—After deciding that the uterus contained a fœtus in a putrid decomposing state, of which it was making no effort by natural contractions to rid itself, the question arose in my mind which would be attended with least danger to my patient—to seek by artificial means to dilate the os uteri, and then excite uterine contractions by the use of ergot, or wait the action of nature, the *vis medicatrix nature*, closely watching the case to guard against every unfavorable indication. I was induced to pursue the latter course by observing how little the system was suffering from the protracted sanguineous discharge. The ulcer upon the os I touched with nitrate of silver, and directed the vagina to be injected with chlorine water several times per day to correct the fetor, volatile liniment to be freely rubbed over the region of the uterus, and advised rest in the horizontal position, and wait. I saw the patient from time to time. The sanguineous discharge continued unabated, but became much lighter colored and less offensive, the uterus slowly diminishing in size and becoming firmer and less tender upon pressure; the patient complaining more and more of debility; countenance becoming more and more anæmic; pulse more frequent and smaller; extremities inclining to be cold, and appetite much impaired. I had been for several days thinking of the propriety of abandoning this *expectant* plan of treatment, and resorting to some more active measures to procure the evacuation of the uterine contents, when, April 29th, I was summoned in great haste. I found the patient with strong uterine contractions occurring at frequent intervals, which expelled, in the course of two hours, what appeared to be a fleshy mass of a pyriform shape; in fact, it was a perfect *cast* of the uterine cavity, some five inches in length, and three in its greatest diameter. The mass I found to be hollow, its walls being made up of a placenta-like structure, which was from one to one and a half inches in thickness at the fundus, and gradually becoming thinner towards the apex, which was membranous. The membranous portion was ruptured, through which the discharge had evidently escaped. From the fundus there was a pyramidal, fleshy mass suspended by its base, which nearly filled the cavity. It was soft and friable between the fingers, and of nearly a black color, denoting that decomposition was taking place. It had no appearance of an organized fœtus, except its being covered by a smooth membrane, which was also reflected over the interior of the cavity. This undoubtedly was once the fœtus, but its further development being suspended by the injury, it degenerated into this anomalous structure.

After the evacuation of the uterus, the patient became speedily convalescent.

The case is of interest to me, by its proving that the placenta may continue its growth and development up to the full period of utero-gestation, even when the fœtus, which it is intended to nourish, is destroyed. The reader will observe that the time of the expulsion of the mass was just nine months after the time fixed upon by the patient as the period of impregnation.

S. MITCHELL, M.D.

Cameron Mills, Steuben Co., N. Y., June, 1852.

THE HEALTH OF LONDON DURING SIX MONTHS.

CONFORMABLY to a plan previously pursued, Dr. Webster read to the Medical Society of London, May 1st, a report in which he stated that the total deaths registered throughout the metropolis during the last half year ending last March were nearly parallel in amount with those recorded during the two similar quarters immediately preceding: the numbers being 28,445 in the former, against 27,954 in the latter period; hence giving an increase of 491 deaths, which difference was, however, entirely confined to the first quarter, an actual diminution of 1019 fatal cases having taken place during the three months terminating on the 27th of March, compared with the same period of 1851, and thereby showing the late season was not insalubrious. This peculiar feature became especially remarkable in the month just quoted, seeing 4787 persons then died throughout the metropolis, whereas during the parallel four weeks of the preceding year, the total mortality amounted to 5478 cases, hence giving a diminution of 691 deaths, or nearly one seventh, notwithstanding the apparently ungenial weather then constantly prevalent. Amongst the diseases which have proved less mortal throughout the recent two quarters, contrasted with the parallel half-year ending in March, 1851, whooping cough assumed a prominent position, 825 deaths having been recorded by that cause, instead of 1205. Measles was fatal in 355 cases, in place of 527. Again, by bronchitis 2472 persons died, against 2534; and by pneumonia 1961 deaths were reported instead of 2190; whilst pleurisy proved fatal to 89 individuals, contradistinguished to 102 during the previous similar period. Further, apoplexy caused death in 625 cases, against 646; paralysis in 593 instances, compared with 656; and lastly, delirium tremens terminated fatally in 62 examples, whereas 68 deaths were thereby recorded during the former season, which constituted satisfactory evidence in reference to greater temperance. The author next alluded to several maladies recently manifesting an uniform rate of mortality, of which hæmorrhage, epilepsy, insanity, gout, stone, diabetes, enteritis and ileus furnished the most marked illustrations, hence showing, however different the constitutions of individuals or the causes of disease may often appear, the actual amount of deaths produced by particular maladies occasionally varies very little amongst the general community resident in London. Subsequently, Dr. Webster discussed at some length those diseases which had exhibited an augmented ratio of deaths. Amongst these, smallpox, scarlatina and erysipelas, all eruptive complaints, as also car-

buncle, received a special notice. By variola 728 persons died recently, instead of 635 in the former parallel half-year. By scarlatina 969 deaths were recorded, against 635, and by erysipelas the number of fatal cases amounted to 236, in place of 168; whilst from carbuncle—hitherto of unfrequent occurrence—26 persons died, instead of only 6 instances during the previous parallel season. It thus appears that smallpox proved unusually severe throughout the whole of last winter, more deaths having been caused by that malignant complaint in London than during any six months of the past twelve years, whereby considerable alarm prevailed in the public mind respecting the protective efficacy of vaccination; but which, Dr. Webster emphatically said, would certainly prevent more effectually the spread of smallpox, were that operation always carefully and properly performed. Consumption, invariably the most deadly disease afflicting mankind throughout this, as many other countries, likewise produced a higher rate of mortality, 3548 deaths by that malady being registered, instead of 3247; thus showing an increase of 301 fatal cases, or 9.27 per cent. Typhus also proved more lethal, 1297 persons having recently died, in place of 1140. By diarrhoea 626 deaths were reported against 539; whilst tabes, peritonitis, hernia, jaundice, and several other complaints, came within the same category. Before concluding this part of his subject, the author especially adverted to the numerous deaths recently occasioned through puerperal fever and child-birth, more females having died than in the former similar half-year; 252 fatal cases by the above causes being enumerated, in contradistinction to 229 previously recorded. Besides these statements, ovarian dropsy was mentioned, from causing death in 26 women, during the past six months, against 17 parallel instances, notwithstanding its often reputed successful treatment by surgical operations. Violent deaths next came under review, by which causes 835 human beings recently perished, in place of 833 during the same six months ending March, 1851; thus giving an increase of 52 fatal cases through various casualties. When this amount is compared with the number stated to have occurred during the two quarters immediately previous—that is, whilst London was enormously crowded by strangers visiting the Great Exhibition—it became exceedingly interesting and instructive to find the aggregate mortality by violence then recorded only amounted to 731 cases, being an actual diminution of 154 deaths, or more than one fifth; thereby proving that the lugubrious anticipations entertained at one time by many well-meaning but mistaken persons respecting the results which that wonderful spectacle might produce upon the health and lives of residents in London, were wholly erroneous. The age of persons who died was subsequently investigated, when it appeared that 12,723 persons died under 15 years, or 44.71 per cent. of the whole mortality; 9571 ranged from that age to 60, being 33.63 per cent.; whilst the remainder or 6050 individuals, had passed the latter period, of whom many were actually 80 and 90 years old, and some even centenarians. Indeed, instances of great longevity amongst the inhabitants of London seemed so numerous, that however extensive its population, and in spite of various causes inimical to health often prevalent, the capital of Britain still

seems one of the most salubrious cities throughout the universe. The author next alluded to the sex of those persons reported to have died recently, of whom the majority were male patients, the respective numbers being 14,411 of that sex, against 13,944 females; hence indicating the ratio of mortality ranged lowest in the weakest portion of society, although the excess was calculated at about ten and three quarter females for every hundred male persons resident within the metropolitan districts. Another important peculiarity afterwards came under notice, which likewise deserves record—namely, the fact of 11,984 more births than deaths having actually taken place in London, which have made a large augmentation, during the last six months, to its aggregate population, wholly irrespective of any immigration, although that source adds considerably every year to the myriads of human beings congregated together in the modern Babylon of England. The mortality recorded in metropolitan eleemosynary institutions was besides investigated by the author, and he stated that more than one sixth of the entire number, or 16.23 per cent., took place within these establishments, the proportion of male patients being 2627, against 1976 females, thereby making altogether 4603 deaths of both sexes. The fatal cases appeared, however, to be most numerous in workhouses, seeing more than half the total amount, or 2683 persons, died therein, the majority being females, hence indicating such inmates exceeded the other sex in number. At general hospitals, an opposite condition, obtained, seeing 804 deaths out of 1227 reported during the last six months were male patients; whilst not more than 423 fatal cases occurred amongst the females under treatment in the above charitable institutions. Several other important questions connected with the recent sanitary condition of London were investigated by Dr. Webster, which it is impossible to particularize in any abstract of his paper; nevertheless one increased cause of death, affecting an interesting portion of the great human family, cannot now be overlooked, particularly as its greater frequency of late, compared with former years, shows a large number of lives are annually sacrificed by prevalent fashion, truly deserving condemnation. This remark was warranted by the numerous deaths reported through the “want of breast-milk”—the natural and best food for infants—which amounted to 141 human beings during the last six months; whereas the total mortality by the same cause did not exceed 107 throughout the parallel two quarters ending in March, 1851. The many grievous evils arising from the common custom of mothers belonging to the lower orders being hired as wet-nurses by members of the middle and upper ranks of society, whereby the offspring of the former become frequently neglected, seem constantly, of late, to augment; since the deaths ascribed to the “want of breast-milk,” in 1828, amounted to 171 cases; in 1849, they were 176; in 1850, the number reached 180; and in 1851, so many as 252 instances were reported,—thus making an excess of 81 fatal results of that description during last year, compared with 1848, or 47.36 per cent. increase. Such serious consequences speak most conclusively respecting the above highly objectionable practice, which therefore ought to be abated, for the sake of suffering innocent humanity.—*London Lancet.*

 THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

 BOSTON, JUNE 30, 1852.

Anniversary of the Mass. Medical Society.—From the testimony of those who were at Pittsfield last week, we should judge the members had a delightful meeting. The hills of Berkshire abound with fascinations, and if any gentleman had returned dissatisfied with the trip, it would have been chargeable to a defective taste, and inability to appreciate natural scenery, rural beauty, and the charms of cultivated society. Eleven physicians, only, were present from Boston, out of the large number residing in the city, which was rather a sparse representation. The demands of business constitute a very reasonable apology, since no one would have remained at home who could conveniently have gone.

Cambridge Scientific School.—But a few miles from Boston there is a celebrated institution for making practical chemists, geologists and engineers, and otherwise preparing young men for elevated scientific employments. When its importance becomes more extensively known, as it will be in the course of time, there is reason for believing a hundred students may be matriculated in a single season. Whatever department of science the individual entertains more regard for than another, at Cambridge he may study it under all possible advantages. Books, chemical tests, a perfect laboratory, instruments, and the daily guidance and instruction of learned and accomplished professors, are among the appliances for developing talent, and giving it an appropriate scientific direction. Such students are in demand all over America. Professor Horsford, of this school, has a reputation of being devoted to the advancement of those under his charge.

Berkshire Medical College.—It was a fortunate event for the Berkshire School, when the old edifice was devoured by the flames. The new building is thoroughly modern, convenient, and appropriate in all respects for the purposes of the institution. The location will always ensure a full class, especially while the faculty is distinguished for agreeable manners and professional attainments.

American Journal of Pharmacy.—From a desire to have the merits of this publication properly estimated, we have again referred to it. Without any show or blustering, it quietly comes to hand every quarter, richly freighted with facts that are useful to medical practitioners. Neither romance nor imagination figure on its broad clear pages. Solid information is given, of a character to command respect, and from sources always reliable. Sometimes a heavy article lumbers up the way, but it is the destiny of all serials to sometimes be less interesting than could be wished. As a whole, we regard this Journal with sentiments of more than ordinary esteem. It labors where the profession should be anxious at least to glean the harvest. How a man can be truly a well qualified practitioner of medicine, and not be fa-

miliar with progressive pharmacy, is not understood. New remedies are constantly being discovered, and new properties of old medicines, not the less important on that account, which are duly chronicled in the well stored numbers of this work. We therefore heartily recommend it to the fostering patronage of the brotherhood.

Yellow Fever.—Formerly, with the commencement of the vernal season, the medical combativeness of this country was roused to a high state of activity on the subject of yellow fever. The bone of contention between two parties who kept the ball rolling while they lived, was this: is the yellow fever contagious or not? It has not yet been settled, either by the belligerent parties or by an act of legislation. Individuals, however, have long since settled down upon certain articles of belief, in regard to it, but the welkin no longer rings with the declarations of contagionists and anti-contagionists. While the most intense excitement prevailed, which of course came and went with the scourge that gave rise to the controversy, the people, learned and unlearned, declared for its infectious character, and acted accordingly on the defensive. Even boards of health, made up of persons, ordinarily, who are profoundly ignorant of the laws of health, in most instances decided in favor of precaution, insulation of the sick, and preventive measures. Yellow fever still exists, but more confined than formerly to southern climates. We frequently hear of its dreadful fatality in South America. Occasionally, it bursts out like a devouring flame at N. Orleans. But how stands the question in our day, is yellow fever contagious or not? How is it understood by those conversant with yellow fever literature of forty and fifty years ago? Science has made great strides since Dr. Rush was in the meridian of his influence; and with it all, are we any wiser than that distinguished father in medicine? Some curiosity is entertained to know how the profession generally contemplate the matter. Are there still two opposite schools in existence, or have they both willingly relinquished an unprofitable contest of words.

Invalid Bed Elevator.—At 26 N. Fifth street, East Cambridge, may be found Johnson's apparatus for elevating the sick, applied to common bedsteads, which is a very simple, efficient and useful contrivance.

Multitudes of inventions have from time to time been before the professional public, to accomplish precisely what Johnson's performs. Whatever scheme is contemplated for alleviating the hardships of a sick bed, if it is not a gift, should be placed within the reach of the poor as well as the rich. This present one costs much less than any of the others heretofore offered in the neighborhood, and that circumstance alone is calculated to advance the interest of the patentee. A depot in Boston for the sale of these elevators is essential to success. East Cambridge is no place for a depot. An order might be executed at New York quite as easily, if not as economically.

Philadelphia College of Medicine.—There may be too much of a good thing, says the proverb,—which is verified in a lecture by Dr. Rush Van Dyke, of this institution. It is a great point to know when to close a speech. Some persons find it equally difficult to terminate an essay with the pen.

Introductory to the eleventh session of the College, on the 8th of March last an elaborate discourse was delivered by this gentleman, which the class politely published, in thirty-eight octavo pages! Although abounding in sentiments that are excellent, and therefore always acceptable, it is overloaded. There is too much of it for the occasion for which it was prepared. The beginning is weakened by the end, in consequence of the weariness induced by the whole. With a few additions, an admirable volume would have been contributed. By diminishing it one-half, it would have been a beautiful lecture. This is not said from a feeling of ill-will or unkindness, but because this business of delivering introductions is apt to be overdone by the very men who are otherwise the most competent. On the thirty-first page the author, as though recovering his consciousness of the march of time, exclaims,—“and here I must be brief!”

Manufacture of Pills.—As we are a decidedly pill taking people in the United States, it has long been a subject of no little consideration among manufacturers, how the material could be kept supplied. Ingenious machines have repeatedly been put in requisition, but still the demand has thus far exceeded the ability of the pill-dealers to meet. A mortifying confession this, but no one in his senses would seriously think of disputing the assertion that we are a pill-devouring nation. It is a fact that colossal fortunes have rarely been accumulated in the United States with any thing but pills! Think of the tons upon tons of Lee's pills, that were taken annually, in the day of their glory. Brandreth overshadowed all his predecessors. His advantage grew out of the happy circumstance for him, that he was a foreigner, which gave immense eclat to the Sing Sing boluses. Moffatt's Life pills exerted a wonderful influence on society. Why, at one period, to be known as no patron of those extraordinary pellets, was enough to debar a person from fashionable society. Then there was an under current of less aristocratic pills, as Dean's, Schaw's, and a hundred more, that answered well enough to physic the yeomanry. The proprietors rarely pocketed more than a hundred thousand dollars a year by them, which shows that they merely catered for vulgar bowels. In short, from the actual receipts that have been realized over and over again, and the unabated appetency still existing for more and stronger, it is evident there is a constant pleasure derived from drastic purgatives. A consideration of all the circumstances, quickened the inventive powers of Mr. Pond, a druggist, of Rutland, Vt., who has produced a combination of metallic rollers, that turn out pills with gratifying rapidity. Simply turn a crank, and out they drop, at the rate of bushels in a day, for aught we know to the contrary. Here is an opportunity for manufacturers to keep in advance of their customers; and by calling on Messrs. Philbrick, Carpenter & Co., 160 Washington street, Boston, they may examine the little steel monster that will turn out pills for the whole world.

Health of the City.—The remarkable degree of health which for some time past has existed in Boston, as manifested by the weekly report of deaths, has been several times alluded to in the Journal. The report for the last week shows a reduced mortality,—43 only being reported as the number of deaths for the week. No report has comprised so small a number since 1848. Exactly the same number occurred during the week ending June 17, of that year. Previous to that time, the same minimum had not

been reached since March, 1847, when 36 was the number for one week. This reduced rate extends to the whole month of June, as the following figures will show. For four weeks in June, 1846, the average weekly mortality was 56.25; June, 1847, 75.5; June, 1848, 61.75; June, 1849, 70.5; June, 1850, 66; June, 1851, 67.75; June, 1852, 55.5. In the last week's report the remarkable facts are also noticeable, that no individual died in the city over 60 years of age, and 22 out of 43 were under 5 years—the average of the whole being about 12 1-2. The reduction seems therefore to have been mainly in the diseases which ordinarily prove fatal to adult life, including the leading one, consumption—and showing conclusively that a more than usual degree of summer heat does not injuriously affect the public health, even in a crowded city like ours.

New President of the Mass. Medical Society.—George Hayward, M.D., of Boston, was elected President of this society, at the late meeting at Pittsfield. In 1853, the society will meet in Boston.

Medical Miscellany.—A resolution was offered at the Homœopathic Convention, lately holden at Syracuse, N. Y., in regard to the expediency of establishing a Homœopathic college.—Cases of death from what is popularly called stroke of the sun, have been frequent of late.—It is stated, but on what authority is not mentioned, that a thousand tons of tobacco are annually chewed and smoked; and twenty tons of human teeth are yearly worn out in chewing it!—There is unusual sickness on the Mississippi river. Cholera is largely on the increase at those places where it has appeared.—Mr. Abbott Lawrence, the United States Minister at the English Court, having stated to the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury that two cases have arrived from New York, addressed to him, and containing fossils sent by Dr. John C. Warren, of Boston, U. S., for presentation to the Royal College of Surgeons at London,—their Lordships have given directions to the proper authorities of the revenue to permit their free delivery for the purpose stated.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—An Account of Further Experiments with a Crocodile, by Dr. Cartwright; and a letter from Professor Horsford on Instruction in Chemistry, have been received.

MARRIED.—Moses R. Greeley, M.D., Surry, to Miss B. R. Pierce.—Dr. T. D. Strong, Westfield, N. Y., to Mrs. L. A. Ainsworth.—Dr. Euclid Borland, of Louisiana, to Miss L. Wilkinson. Charles H. Osgood, M.D., Portland, Me., to Miss A. W. Appleton.

DIED.—In Williamstown, Mass., Dr. Samuel Smith, aged 73.—In Philadelphia, Dr. James B. Rogers, Prof. of Chemistry in the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania.—Dr. James B. Wadleigh, of Haverhill, Mass., 82.—In Goshen, Indiana, G. H. Parsons, M.D., 32, formerly of Exeter, N. H.—In Brooklyn, N. Y., Dr. John S. Wiley, of the U. S. Navy, 57.

Deaths in Boston—for the week ending Saturday noon, June 26th, 43.—Males, 27—females, 16. Accidental, 3—inflammation of bowels, 1—consumption, 6—convulsions, 2—dropsy, 2—dropsy of brain, 1—drowned, 2—typhoid fever, 1—scarlet fever, 12—homicide, 1—crouping cough, 1—hip disease, 1—heart disease, 1—infantile, 3—puerperal, 1—scrofula, 1—teething, 1.

Under 5 years, 22—between 5 and 20 years, 6—between 20 and 40 years, 12—between 40 and 60 years, 3—over 60 years, 0. Americans, 12; foreigners and children of foreigners, 31. The above includes 2 deaths at the City institutions.

Medical College of Ohio.—Our readers have been already apprised of the resignation of Dr. John Bell; and more recently, Dr. Mussey has resigned the chair of Surgery. Professor Mussey had, for some time past, contemplated a resignation, and the present year was the period fixed by him for that purpose. His determination to resign grew out of advancing years, and his numerous and pressing engagements. We have not space, at this time, to speak of the character and services of Professor Mussey, but hope, at some future time, to say more of this veteran surgeon. It is gratifying to state that he has been elected Emeritus Professor of Surgery—a distinction justly merited.—*West. Lancet.*

Medical Convention.—The Annual Convention of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland was held at Baltimore city on Wednesday, June 2, in the Chemical Hall of the Washington University. In the evening, Dr. C. C. Cox, of Easton, delivered the annual address before a very large and intelligent audience. The *American* says the address was eloquent and instructive, and was listened to with much interest.

On the Employment of Tracheotomy. By M. TROUSSEAU.—In the present series of papers M. Trousseau relates the cases in which he has most recently performed tracheotomy for croup. Adverting to his experience upon the subject, he states that he has performed this operation altogether 169 times (11 for chronic disease of the larynx, and 158 for croup); and that 43 of these cases, or a little more than a fourth, have recovered. Among his last 18 cases, however, there have been 8 recoveries, or nearly one-half. The results obtained at the *Hopital des Enfants* have not been less satisfactory of late; for of 19 cases operated upon, between January and August, 1851, one-half have recovered, and Mr. Guersant has been as successful in his private practice. M. Trousseau believes that one reason of the greater success in later years is, that now the principles of treatment in these cases are better understood; the children are brought to the hospital in a less exhausted state, their powers not having been lowered by the application of leeches and blisters, heretofore so common. Still more important, however, does he attach to the modifications he has made in the treatment after he has opened the trachea. Thus, he has discontinued the application of a strong solution of nitrate of silver to the trachea and bronchi, which he used formerly to insist upon. He now, too, employs a double canula, so that the inner one may be taken out and cleaned when necessary, without disturbing the other; and after the wound is dressed he covers all the parts over with a cravat, and thus avoids the expectoration and desiccation of the mucus which occurred when they used to be left exposed.—*L'Union Medicale.* 1851. No. 100.

Statistics of Cancer.—The Professor of Surgery (Mr. Paget) in his first lecture upon Malignant Tumors, at the Royal College of Surgeons, made the startling announcement, that persons operated upon for cancer died, upon an average, thirteen months sooner of their disease than those who were not operated upon. The average was taken from upwards of sixty cases, at the same time omitting all those who died from the immediate effects of the operation.—*Lancet.*